



Testimony to the House Economic Matters Committee
HB121 Electric Companies – Regional Transmission Organizations – Report
(Utility Transparency and Accountability Act)
Position: Favorable

January 23, 2025

The Honorable CT Wilson, Chair
House Economic Matters Committee
Room 231, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
cc: Members, House Economic Matters

Honorable Chair Wilson and members of the committee:

Economic Action Maryland Fund (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations that advances economic rights, equity and housing justice for Maryland families through research, education, direct service, and advocacy. Our 12,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.

I am writing to urge your support of the Utility Transparency and Accountability Act, which would require electric companies to report annually to the Maryland Public Service Commission on all recorded votes they and their affiliates cast in meetings of Regional Transmission Organizations (RTOs). These organizations oversee electricity transmission across large areas and influence grid operations, pricing, and policy decisions. As utility costs are incredibly high, and set to increase further¹, it is crucial that there is transparency in the system that sets these rates.

The reporting requirement outlined by the bill ensures that electric companies disclose how they vote on decisions that can impact electricity rates, grid reliability, and infrastructure investments. This allows consumers and the PSC to gain insight into whether their utilities are acting in the best interests of the public. Additionally, by mandating disclosure, the bill discourages utilities from making decisions that could unfairly prioritize corporate profits over

¹*Maryland electric customers face up to 24% bill hikes from PJM capacity auction: report*
<https://www.utilitydive.com/news/maryland-bge-pepco-electricity-bill-pjm-capacity-auction-opc-ratepayer/724319/#:~:text=Talen%20Energy's%20Brandon%20Shores%20power,Maryland%20Office%20of%20Peo,ple's%20Counsel.>

2209 Maryland Ave · Baltimore, MD · 21218 · 410-220-0494
info@econaction.org · www.econaction.org
Tax ID 52-2266235

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consumer needs, such as opposing renewable energy integration or favoring higher-cost transmission solutions.

This bill also supports efforts of the PSC when it comes to saving ratepayer dollars, as it provides the PSC with more detailed information to monitor utility behavior and advocate for policies that protect ratepayers, ensuring utilities prioritize affordability and sustainability.

This bill empowers consumers and regulators by shedding light on decisions that significantly impact electricity service and costs.

For these reasons, I urge your favorable support on HB121.

Best,

Zoe Gallagher,
Policy Associate

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